

Dark Hollow

By Anna Katharine Green
Illustrations by C. D. Rhodes
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SYNOPSIS.

A curious crowd of neighbors invaded the mysterious home of Judge Ostrander, county judge and eccentric recluse, following a veiled woman who had gained entrance through the gates of the high double barriers surrounding the place. The woman had disappeared but the judge is found in a cataleptic state. The judge awakes. Miss Weeks explains to him what has occurred during his seclusion. He secretly discovers the whereabouts of the veiled woman. She proves to be the widow of a man tried before the judge and charged for murder years before. Her daughter is engaged to the judge's son, from whom he is estranged, but the murder is between the lovers. She plans to clear her husband's memory and asks the judge's aid. Alone in her room Deborah Scoville reads the newspaper. It contains the story of the murder of Algernon Etheridge by John Scoville in Dark Hollow, twelve years before. The judge and Mrs. Scoville meet at Spencer's Park and she shows him how, on the day of the murder, she saw the shadow of a man whittling a stick and a woman peeping out. The judge engages her and her daughter Reuther to live with him in his mysterious home. Deborah and her lawyer, Black, go to the police station and see the stick used to murder Etheridge. She discovers a broken knife-handle, embedded in it. Deborah and Reuther go to live with the judge. Deborah sees a portrait of Oliver, the judge's son, with a black band painted across the eyes. That night she finds, in Oliver's room, a stick with a peak like the whittled one, and a knife with a broken knife-handle. Anonymous letters increase for Scoville.

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

"I have been told," thus Deborah easily proceeded, "that for a small house yours contains the most wonderful assortment of interesting objects. Where did you ever get them?"

"My father was a collector on a very small scale of course, and my mother had a passion for hoarding which prevented anything from going out of this house after it had come into it."

"My husband—" began Mrs. Scoville, thoughtfully.

Miss Weeks started in consternation at Mrs. Scoville who hastened to say: "You wonder that I can mention my husband. Perhaps you will not be so surprised when I tell you that in my eyes he is a martyr, and quite guiltless of the crime for which he was punished."

"You think that?" There was real surprise in the manner of the questioner. Mrs. Scoville's brow cleared. She was pleased at this proof that her affairs had not yet reached the point of general gossip.

"Miss Weeks, I am a mother. I have a young and lovely daughter. Can I look in her innocent eyes and believe her father to have so forgotten his responsibilities as to overshadow her life with crime? No, I will not believe it. Circumstances were in favor of his conviction, but he never lifted the stick which struck down Algernon Etheridge."

Miss Weeks, who had sat quite still during the utterance of these remarks, flinched about at their close, with what appeared to the speaker, a sudden and quite welcome relief.

"Oh!" she murmured, and said no more. It was not a topic she found easy of discussion.

The sadness which now spread over the very interesting countenance of her visitor, offered her an excuse for the introduction of a far more momentous topic; one she had burned to introduce, but had not known how.

"Mrs. Scoville, I hear that Judge Ostrander has got your daughter a piano. That is really a wonderful thing for him to do. Not that he is so close with his money, but that he has always been so set against all gayety and companionship. I suppose you did not know the shock it would be to him when you asked Bela to let you into the gates."

"No! I didn't know. But it is all right now. The judge seems to welcome the change. Miss Weeks, did you know Algernon Etheridge well enough to tell me if he was as good and irreproachable a man as they all say?"

"He was a good man, but he had a dreadfully obstinate streak in his disposition and very set ideas. I have heard that he and the judge used to argue over a point for hours. And he was most always wrong. For instance, he was wrong about Oliver."

"Judge Ostrander's son, you know. Mr. Etheridge wanted him to study for a professorship; but the boy was determined to go into journalism, and you see what a success he has made of it. As a professor he would probably have been a failure."

"Was this difference of opinion on the calling he should pursue the cause of Oliver's leaving home in the way he did?" continued Deborah, conscious of walking on very thin ice.

But Miss Weeks rather welcomed than resented this curiosity. Indeed, she was never tired of enlarging upon the Ostranders.

"I have never thought so. The judge would not quarrel with Oliver on so small a point as that. My idea is, though I never talk of it much, that they had a great quarrel over Mr. Etheridge. Oliver never liked the old student; I've watched them and I've seen. He hated his coming to the house so much; he hated the way his father singled him out and deferred to him and made him the confidant of all his troubles. When they went on their walks, Oliver always hung back, and more than once I have seen him make a grimace of distaste when his father urged him forward. He was only a boy, I know, but his dislikes meant something, and if it ever happened that he spoke out his whole mind, you may be sure that some very bitter words passed."

Was this meant as an innuendo? Impossible to tell. Such nervous, fussy little bodies often possess minds of unexpected subtlety. Deborah gave up all hope of understanding her, and, accepting her statements at their face value, softly remarked:

"You must have a very superior mind to draw such conclusions from the little you have seen. I have heard many explanations given for the breach you name, but never any so plausible as this."

A flash from the speaker's violet eyes, that a burst of courage and she quick retort:

"And what explanation does Oliver himself give? You ought to know, Mrs. Scoville."

The remark was so sudden in its delivery that Deborah flinched and blushed for a moment. She had heard many explanations given for the breach you name, but never any so plausible as this.

It came quick enough.

"That he expected to marry your daughter?" Oliver, Mrs. Scoville, in common talk here now. I hope you don't mind my mentioning it."

Deborah's head went up. She faced the other fairly, with the look born of mother passion, and mother passion only.

"Reuther is blameless in this matter," she protested. "She was brought up in ignorance of what I felt sure would prove a handicap and misery to her. She loves Oliver as she will never love any other man, but when she was told her real name and understood fully what that name carries with it, she declined to saddle him with her shame. That's her story, Miss Weeks; one that hardly fits her appearance, which is very delicate. And, let me add, having once accepted her father's name, she refuses to be known by any other. I have brought her to Shelby where to our own surprise and Reuther's great happiness, we have been taken in by Judge Ostrander, an act of kidnap for which we are very grateful."

Miss Weeks got up, took down one of her rarest treasures from an old etagere standing in one corner and laid it in Mrs. Scoville's hand.

"For your daughter," she declared. "Noble girl! I hope she will be happy."

The mother was touched, but not quite satisfied yet of the giver's real feelings towards Oliver, and, after thanking her warmly, remarked:

"There is but one thing that will ever make Reuther happy, and that she cannot have unless a miracle occurs. Oh, I do not wonder you smile. This is not the day of miracles. But if my belief in my husband could be shared; if I should be enabled to clear his name, might not love and loyalty be left to do the rest? Wouldn't the judge's objections, in that case, be removed? What do you think, Miss Weeks?"

"There! we will say no more about it." The little woman's attitude and voice were almost prayerful. "You have judgment enough for two. Besides, the miracle has not happened," she interjected, with a smile which seemed to say it never would.

Deborah sighed. Whether or not it was quite an honest expression of her feeling we will not inquire. She was there for a definite purpose and her way to it was, as yet, far from plain. The negative with which she followed up this sigh was one of sorrowful acceptance. She made haste, however, to qualify it.

"But I have not given up all hope. I know as well as any one how impossible the task must prove, unless I can

light upon fresh evidence. And where am I to get that? Only from some new witness."

Miss Weeks' polite smile took on an expression of indulgence. This roused Deborah's pride, and, hesitating no longer, she anxiously remarked:

"I have sometimes thought that Oliver Ostrander might be that witness. He certainly was in the ravine the night Algernon Etheridge was struck down."

Had she been an experienced actress of years she could not have thrown into this question a greater lack of all innuendo. Miss Weeks, already under her fascination, heard the tone but never thought to notice the quick rise and fall of her visitor's uneasy bosom, and so unwarned, responded with all due frankness:

"I know he was. But how will that help you? He had no testimony to give in relation to this crime, or he would have given it."

"That is true." The admission fell mechanically from Deborah's lips; she was not conscious, even of making it. Then, as her emotion choked her into silence, she sat with piteous eyes searching Miss Weeks' face, till she had recovered her voice, when she added this vital question:

"How did you know that Oliver was in the ravine that night? I only guessed it."

"Well, it was in this way. I do not often keep my eye on my neighbors (oh, no, Miss Weeks!), but that night I chanced to be looking over the way just at the minute Mr. Etheridge came out, and something I saw in his manner and in that of the judge who had followed him to the door, and in that of Oliver who, on an errand, was leaning towards them from a window over the porch, made me think that a conspiracy was going on between the two and people of which Oliver was the object. This naturally interested me, and I watched them and sought to see Oliver suddenly miss his hat and shake it at Mr. Etheridge, then, in great haste, turn toward the window and disappear inside. The next minute, and before he was below and long talking, I saw another glimpse of him as he hurried around the corner of the house on his way to the ravine."

"And Mr. Etheridge?"

"Oh, he just went off. I watched him as he went in an hour and a half in the wind. Little did I think he would never pass my window again."

So interested was Deborah that neither for the moment realized the strangeness of the situation or that in view of her connection with a crime she was in conversation with a woman who

had been a witness to the crime.

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sounded incongruous enough to Deborah, in whose heart at that moment a leaf was turned upon the past, which left the future hopelessly blank.

"Must you go?" Deborah had risen mechanically. "Don't, I beg, till you have relieved my mind about Judge Ostrander. I don't suppose that there is really anything behind that door or his which it would alarm any one to see?"

Then, Deborah understood Miss Weeks.

But she was ready for her.

"I've never seen anything of the sort," said she, "and I make up my bed in that very room every morning."

"Oh! And Miss Weeks drew a deep breath. "No article of immense value, such as that rare old bit of real Salsuma in the cabinet over there?"

"No," answered Deborah, with all the patience she could muster. "Judge Ostrander seems very simple in his tastes. I doubt if he would know Salsuma if he saw it."

Miss Weeks sighed. "Yes, he has never expressed the least wish to look over my shelves. So the double fence means nothing?"

"A whim," ejaculated Deborah, making quietly for the door. "The judge likes to walk at night when quite through with his work; and he doesn't like his ways to be noted. But he prefers the lawn now. I leave his step out there every night."

"Well, it's something to know that he leads a more normal life than formerly!" sighed the little lady as she prepared to usher her guest out.

"Come again, Mrs. Scoville; and, if I may, I will drop in and see you some day."

Deborah accorded her permission and made her final adieu. She felt as if a hand which had been stealing up her chest had suddenly gripped her throat, choking her. She had found the man who had cast that fatal shadow down the ravine, twelve years before.

CHAPTER X.

Anonymous Letters.

Deborah considered the judge's house a haunted place. She reached her room and it was about to enter, when a sudden thought she paused and her feet wandered down the hall all their way to another door, the one she had closed behind her the night before, with the deep resolve never to open it again except under compulsion. A few minutes later she was standing in one of the dim corners of Oliver's study room, reopening a book which she had taken down from a shelf on her former visit. She remembered it from its torn back and the fact that it was an algebra. Turning to the fly leaf, she looked again at the names and schoolboy phrases she had seen scribbled all over its surface, for the one which she remembered as, "I hate algebra."

It had not been a very clearly written "algebra," and she would never have given this interpretation to the scrawl had she been in a better mood. Now another thought had come to her, and she wanted to see the word again. Was she glad or sorry to have yielded to this impulse, when by a closer inspection she perceived that the word was not "algebra" at all, but "algebra," and here and there on other pages, sometimes in characters so rubbed and faint as to be almost unrecognizable and again so pressed into the paper by a vigorous pencil point as to have broken their way through to the leaf underneath.

The work of an abandoned schoolboy! But—this tale dated back many years. Farther than ever and with heads trembling in the point of incapacity she put the book back and flew to her own room, the prey of thoughts more mad than madness.

It was the second time in her life that she had been called upon to go through this painful drama. Then, only her own happiness and honor were involved; now it was her father's and the fortune which sustained her through the extremity of her own terrible fall as the principal of her father's. And again the two cases were not equal. Her husband and her father, which is a matter and had been for the ready completion of people. But Oliver was a man of reputation and kindly heart, and yet, in the course of time this had come, and the question once again arose as to whether Reuther was a fit mate for him and how evolved from this: Was he a fit mate for her?

(To be continued.)

And at home.

Soon after Deborah had declared herself in favor of the British army at the memorable battle of Blenheim the Duke of Marlborough, in traversing the route, observed a soldier leaning in a peculiar manner on the butt-end of his musket. His gaze immediately attracted him. "Why so pensive, my friend, after as glorious a victory?" "It may be glorious," replied the son of Mars, "but I have only earned my pay by contributing to all this devastation of families!"

dren followed; then representatives from every class in the school, even the Bible union. Offerings were accompanied by specially prepared recitations, songs or dialogues, and gifts dressed to suit their gift. Children bringing carnations appeared as "Quakers"; rice suggested Chinese costume; tea, Japanese; "poor" products, the Puritan style, each. Songs were set to popular airs, making drill work easy.

Finally, Santa Claus had a valuable supply of provisions for an orphan asylum. The happy givers then received remembrances from their teachers. All found "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Next Sunday's lesson is the record of the answer to their prayer.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of the Sunday School Course of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR JANUARY 2

THE ASCENDING LORD.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 1:1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT—When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.—Eph. 4:8.

More and more we are convinced that the great trouble with Christians is that the life of Jesus for them closes with the gospels. We seem to fail to comprehend that he is living today as much and even more than he was nineteen hundred years ago. The Book of Acts is a continuation of the Gospels (v. 1), and is yet a closed book.

I. The Proof of the Resurrection, vv. 1-13. (1) Its reality. No better proved event is recorded in history than the resurrection (see I Cor. 15:4-8); it stands absolutely unchallenged. The all-sufficient proof was that during "forty days" his disciples had talked with him concerning the kingdom. Note, it was only his disciples who beheld, his enemies never saw him after Calvary. (2) Its burden. Just before his ascension Jesus (v. 2) gave his disciples definite instructions, commandments (Matt. 28:19, 20, etc.) (a) to tarry in Jerusalem, (b) to be clothed with power, (c) to go forth and to proclaim or herald his gospel. During those intervening days of waiting for the endowment with power they alone knew the gospel and men were perishing, which gives point to the necessity of receiving the spirit before undertaking the work of witnessing.

II. The Promise of the Father, vv. 4-8. Read carefully Joel 2:28, Isa. 44:3, and compare with Luke 24:49, and also the words of the Baptizer, Luke 3:16. (1) To receive the Holy Spirit is an obligation upon all, they were "charged not to depart from Jerusalem" (v. 4) (See also Eph. 5:18). (b) The reception is to be preceded by repentance for sin, though the confession of sin and the acknowledgment of Christ as Savior is only possible through the spirit (I Cor. 12:3). (c) With the spirit comes power, authority (v. 7). This power is of God, it is spiritual, it is not "temporal" nor of the church. The kingdom is a spiritual idea (Luke 17:21) and the vice-regent of that kingdom is the Holy Spirit. The program of Jesus is "spirit-filled men as witnesses" and "beginning at Jerusalem." This promise of Jesus (v. 8) suggested to the disciples the restoration of Israel to its place among the nations and in his reply he intimates that such is a possibility (see Isa. 1:25-27, Ezek. 36:23-28, Hosea, 3:4, 5, Joel 3:16-21, Amos 9:11-15), but in a most emphatic manner he tells them that of that hour God has reserved to himself the knowledge (Matt. 24:36, Mark 3:22). When they were to receive the kingdom he does not tell, but when they should receive power he tells them plainly, viz: when the spirit should come upon them. The spirit is not for mere happiness or gratification, but comes upon us for usefulness (see 4:13, 31, 33, 5:32, 9:17, 29) and that beginning at home, in Jerusalem, then to the ends of the earth. A spirit-filled Christian or church is a good missionary and foreign evangelist as well. Finishing his message, he lifted his hands and in benediction he ascended on high, and this act has ever since been continued. His ascension is a blessed historical fact, fully attested and deeply significant. He ascended to lead captivity captive, to appear in God's presence for us in our behalf and to prepare a place for us that where he is, we may be also (Eph. 1:24, John 14:2). His presence now on high guarantees our presence there hereafter (John 12:26, 14:3, Rev. 3:21).

III. The Present Place of Jesus, vv. 9-11. While he talked with his disciples he ascended even as Enoch "waited and was not" (Gen. 5:24, Heb. 11:22, R. V.). The query must naturally have arisen in their minds, "When shall we have another interview with him?" As that question arose behold two were near to answer (v. 10) and their answer was a practical one: "Why stand looking into heaven?" There are times to gaze and times to go. Now is the time to be fulfilling his command (vv. 4, 12) and not to be lost in wonder and speculation. But to cheer their hearts these men in white came, and us, a wonderful promise, viz., Jesus is coming back, visibly, personally (the words of the original text are very plain and positive) and, as he was received in the clouds, he will come in a cloud.

This promise is and has always been the great hope of the church (Titus 2:13).

IV. The Place of Prayer, vv. 12-14. The disciples were bidden to tarry at a specified place, Jerusalem, and to tarry at a specified place for a particular purpose, viz., "power." They obeyed. The empowering blessing can only be received through obedience (Acts 5:32). The time of waiting was not idly nor listlessly passed, for it was spent in prayer.

Jesus is yet, and shall ever more, be doing and teaching for and through those who love him, who look for his glorious appearing.

Next Sunday's lesson is the record of the answer to their prayer.

Treat Children's Colds Externally

Don't dose delicate little stomachs with harmful internal medicine. VICK'S Vapo-Rub Salve, applied externally, relieves by inhalation as a vapor and by absorption through the skin. VICK'S can be used freely with perfect safety on the youngest member of the family. 25c, 50c, or \$1.00.

VICK'S VAPORUB SALVE

SPORTIVE CAREER NEAR END

Mr. Pipwillow Was in Position to Prophecy With Confidence as to Kitty's Future.

Mr. Pipwillow looked at his garden, shook his fist at the neighbor's cat, then, humming a hymn of folio hate, made his way to the nearest drug store.

Ten minutes later he was tempting the offender to his garden once more with a saucer of milk and something which came from a bottle bearing a red label.

"Hullo!" came his neighbor's voice, blithely, over the fence. "My cat been troubling you again, eh? It's a playful little way o' cats to make a racing track o' next-door's cabbage-patch."

"I suppose it is," said Pipwillow, gently, as tabby was purring over the saucer. "Perhaps yours has nearly finished his training gallops. I wouldn't be surprised if he's doing his last lap now!"

FARMER WAS NOT IMPRESSED

Visit to Country Editor Resulted in Willie's Turning from the Paths of Literature.

Into the room of a country editor came a bluff old farmer with his eighteen-year-old son.

"I've come for a little information, sir," he said hopefully.

"I shall be delighted to do what I can for you," was the polite reply.

"Well, this son of mine wants to go into the literary business, and I thought you would be able to tell us if there was any money in it. It's a good line, isn't it?"

"Ye-es," replied the editor, hesitatingly. "I've been at it myself for a good many years and—"

The farmer thereupon looked around at the shabby office and then at the shabby editor.

"Come on, Willie," he ordered. "Back to your plowing, my lad!"

The Last Resort.

Pat's one trouble was that he could not wake up in the morning. His landlady had tried every device she could think of, but even the most determined of alarm clocks had no effect on Pat's slumbers.

One day he returned home from his work with a large parcel.

"There, now, Mrs. Jones," said he triumphantly, as he unwrapped a huge bell, "and what d'ye think o' that now?"

"Goodness, man!" exclaimed the surprised landlady. "Whatever are you wanting with that great thing?"

As he tucked the bell under his arm and prepared to go upstairs, Pat replied, with a knowing grin:

"Sure, and I'm going to ring it at six o'clock every morning and wake meself up!"

He Meant Business.

Mrs. Bennett arrived at the conclusion that the attachment of Teddy Nolan, the policeman, for her cook must be investigated lest it prove disastrous to domestic discipline.

One morning she took Annie, the cook, to task regarding the matter. Annie admitted her attentions.

"Do you think he means business, Annie?" asked Mrs. Bennett.

"Yes, mum, O' t'ink so," replied Annie. "Annyway, he's begun to complain about my cookin', mum."—Judge.

To Fortify the System Against Winter Cold

Many users of GROVE'S TASTELESS CHILL TONIC make it a practice to take a number of bottles in the fall to strengthen and fortify the system against the cold weather during the winter. Everyone knows the tonic effect of Quinine and Iron which this preparation contains in a tasteless and acceptable form. It purifies and enriches the blood and builds up the whole system. 60c.

Out of It.

"Pa, what's 'Innocuous desuetude?'"

"It's what I fall into, son, when you mother and a caller start to discussing the servant problem."

Piles Relieved by First Application

And cured in 6 to 14 days by PAZO OINTMENT, the universal remedy for all forms of Piles. Druggists refund money if it fails. 50c.

Girls shouldn't throw kisses; it's almost impossible for a girl to hit the thing she aims at.

CREAM

Separator OIL in cans